

18 July 1986

Laxalt Says C.I.A. Chief Suggested Marcos Call Early Vote

By CHARLES MOORE
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 17 — The Director of Central Intelligence, William J. Casey, originally proposed to Ferdinand E. Marcos that he call the early presidential election that ultimately led to Mr. Marcos's exile, according to an article by Senator Paul Laxalt.

Mr. Laxalt, a close personal friend of President Reagan who was a Presidential envoy to the Philippine President in October 1985, wrote that they "briefly discussed" such an election that month, adding that "this possibility had been previously broached to him by C.I.A. Director William Casey."

The decision to hold an early presidential election instead of waiting for promised balloting in 1987 proved to be politically disastrous for Mr. Marcos. His opposition, which had previously been splintered, united under the candidacy of Corazon C. Aquino. International election observers concluded that she probably won the election but that massive vote fraud had occurred.

In the ensuing civil unrest in the Philippines, key elements of the Army and Ministry of Defense deserted Mr. Marcos and he left the country on a United States aircraft.

Laxalt Article on Marcos

Senator Laxalt made his disclosure in an article called "My Conversations with Ferdinand Marcos, a lesson in Personal Diplomacy," published in the summer issue of "Policy Review," the quarterly journal of the conservative

Heritage Foundation of Washington.

Mr. Casey was asked to comment on the article, but Sharon Foster, a spokesman for the C.I.A., said, "the answer is the Agency has nothing to say about the matter."

Some of Senator Laxalt's article covered previously known facts, including his emotional telephone conversations with Mr. Marcos in February in which the Nevada Republican urged Mr. Marcos to "cut and cut cleanly" because "the time has come" to surrender office.

However, the Senator provided what appeared to be at least one new piece of information from subsequent telephone conversations he had with Mr.

Marcos, who was by then in exile in Hawaii.

'He Thought He Was Going Home'

"It is important to understand," wrote the Senator, "that he didn't believe he was going to have to leave the country when he left the Presidential palace. He thought he was going home to northern Luzon. Otherwise, he told me, 'I would have never taken all that currency out of there. That was in violation of our law. I thought I was going home.'"

A large sum of money was confiscated by the United States Customs Service when the Marcos party arrived in Hawaii.

Mr. Marcos made the surprise announcement that he would call the early election during an appearance on the ABC News program "This Week" in November 1985. Senator Laxalt's article said that he discussed the program the week before with Mr. Marcos after it had been decided that both would be guests on it.

Mr. Laxalt wrote that after Mr. Marcos told him that he planned to call the election, the Senator replied "it would be very dramatic for you to make that announcement" on "This Week."

The Senator's article added: "I think he figured he could win the election overwhelmingly. Obviously, some of his information was unreliable."